

LAMPLIGHTER

1 Adar 2
Parshas Pekudei

1234

11 March
5776/2016

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Pekudei, enumerates all the details that pertain to the setting up of the Tabernacle, a subject that has already been dealt with exhaustively in previous chapters of the Torah. If the purpose of Pekudei is to teach us that indeed, all the work on the Tabernacle was carried out exactly as G-d had commanded, would it not have sufficed to say so in one sentence? Why list every single detail all over again?

This question can also be asked about another section of the Torah, which speaks about the period immediately following Moses' completion of the Tabernacle. Each of the 12 leaders of the tribes of Israel brought offerings to the newly erected Sanctuary, and the Torah tells, in great detail, what these offerings entailed. Yet on the face of it, all 12 offerings were identical. Why was it necessary to repeat the same words 12 times, rather than say that all of them brought the identical offerings?

The answer lies in the explanation that only externally did the 12 offerings resemble each other; spiritually, each offering had a different content and purpose. The Torah could not have said that each of the 12 leaders brought the identical offering, for in fact, they all differed from one another.

This explanation is true for this week's Torah portion as well: The Tabernacle which G-d commanded the Jews to build was in reality a different entity from the one which Moses erected. The Torah states, "These are the accounts of the Tabernacle, the Tabernacle of the testimony." This repetition of the word "tabernacle" alludes to the two sanctuaries implied by the text—the physical and the spiritual.

The physical Tabernacle was the one that G-d instructed Moses to erect. This tabernacle was built of physical materials - silver, gold, wood, etc. The second Tabernacle is the spiritual one that each of us must build, and the various building materials are spiritual entities that we must utilize for our goal.

Even though the spiritual Tabernacle G-d showed Moses on Mount Sinai was doubtless on a higher spiritual plane than the one built by the Children of Israel, it was precisely in the physical one where G-d's Presence dwelled. It was only after "Moses completed his tasks" that "the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the Glory of G-d filled the Sanctuary." G-d desired an actual physical location in the corporeal world to show the manifestation of His infinite nature.

It is easy to belittle the power of the individual to influence his surroundings, and make an impact on the world. How can one person make a difference and bring pleasure to His Creator, when we are so puny and insignificant? The Torah answers: it is precisely because we are in such a physical world that G-d desires our performance of mitzvot (commandments). It is up to us, we who are in this world, to imbue it with G-dliness and turn it into a true dwelling place for the One Above.

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Home

By Yanki Tauber

Nations go to war over it, families sign away a sizeable chunk of their income for the next thirty years to acquire one. The sages of the Talmud go so far as to say that "a man without a homestead is not a man."

A home is more than a roof to keep out the rain, walls to keep out unwanted visitors, a kitchen in which to prepare food and a bed in which to sleep. Forts, office buildings, hotels and restaurants can perform those functions as well, or better, than any residence. But only at home is a person at home. Home is where you can make faces at the mirror, wear an old green sweater with a hole under the armpit, and eat pickles with peanut butter—because you feel like it.

G-d, too, desires a home—a place where He can be fully and uninhibitedly Himself. The Chassidic masters ask: Why did G-d create the physical world? What can our coarse, finite, strife-ridden existence give Him that the spiritual dimensions of creation cannot? And they answer: G-d created the physical world because He wanted a home—a place where He can do things because He feels like it.

G-d's first home was a two-room, 45-by-15-foot building. According to Exodus, it was made of the following materials: gold, silver, copper, blue-, purple- and red-dyed wool, flax, goat hair, animal hides and wood. It was made to order, from detailed specifications given to Moses at Mount Sinai. It sat in the very centre of the Israelite camp in the desert, and was designed so that it could be dismantled and reassembled as they wandered from place to place for the forty years between their exodus from Egypt and their entry into the Holy Land. Later, a larger and more permanent version was constructed on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Said G-d to man: I created wisdom, knowledge and understanding, and in these creations My mind dwells. I created love, justice and compassion, and in these my character resides. I created beauty, splendour and majesty, and in these I invest My personality. But none of these are My home, any more than the office at which you work or the theatre at which you are entertained is yours. So I created physical matter—the most undivine thing I could conceive of—so that I should have a place in which there are no roles for Me to play and no characteristics for Me to project. Only My will to fulfil.

When you take your gold (your material excesses), your silver (your stolid middle-class wealth) and your copper (your pauper's subsistence pennies) and use them to fashion a reality that conforms to My will, you have made Me at home in My world.

Slice of LIFE

Mrs. Raizel Estulin came out of the Rebbe's office with tears of excitement. It was more than a dream come true.

Just a few years ago she was behind the Iron Curtain with no avenue of escape other than prayer. Russia was closed... forever! Or so it seemed. Every year she applied anew for a visa to move to Israel to her family. But every year she, like millions of others, was rejected.

But what pained her most of all was that she would never see more than just a picture of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

But miraculously it happened! One day she looked in her mailbox to see a letter from the government. It was permission to leave to Israel!

It was truly a miracle! And to make it complete, shortly after she got settled in Israel her family bought her a plane ticket to the Rebbe.

When she entered the Rebbe's office he asked about her family, about her health, about the situation in Russia asked how she was acclimating to Israel, and then told her that when she returns there she should devote time to convincing Jewish women and girls to light Shabbat Candles. (For thousands of years Jewish women have been lighting Candles before the commencement of Sabbath night).

But Mrs. Estulin feebly protested that she didn't really even know how to speak Hebrew to which the Rebbe answered. "You do what you have to and if any one makes trouble tell them that you are doing it at my request."

Mrs. Estulin, a true Chassid of the Rebbe, wasted no time. The first Friday after her return to Israel she took a bus to the nearest hospital and bravely entered with the plan of going from room to room distributing candles together with a folder explaining why, how and when to light them.

She was full of optimism but there definitely was more than a trace of anxiety. After all, she really couldn't speak the language properly and had never really approached total strangers before to ask them to do commandments.

And sure enough, the first room she entered War!

It was a sixty year old woman who, as

soon as Mrs. Estulin entered the room with a smile and outreached candles, opened fire: "What are you doing here?! What? Candles for Shabbat? Commandments? GET OUT!! All you religious people are parasites! Do you hear me? Parasites! OUT OF MY ROOM!!"

Mrs. Estulin flinched and wanted to just apologize and leave but suddenly she remembered what the Rebbe said and blurted out.

"Listen, I'm a follower of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and...." but her limited Hebrew and the shouts of the woman still ringing in her ears tied her tongue.

Then something happened. The woman calmed down! "Ehh? You said the Rebbe of Lubavitch sent you?"

"Yes." Mrs. Estulin answered and asked incredulously, "Do you know the Rebbe?"

The woman's eyes filled with tears and she answered in Russian. First apologizing for yelling and then she explained.

"When I was young my parents passed away leaving me and my brother to fend for ourselves. He went to Medical School and graduated with high honours while I turned to other interests. But we were very close because all we had in the world was each other.

"But things weren't good in Russia and after a while we decided to leave. My brother, although he was head of a department in a large hospital, was making almost no money and for me Russia was only bad memories.

"To our joy we got permission to leave but, for the first time, we parted ways. I moved to Israel to settle down but my brother wanted New York where he could make the money he deserved. But, of course, we agreed to write regularly and eventually rejoin.

"But things didn't work out as we thought. I managed to get a job and a place to live but my brother couldn't get work. It seems that he overestimated the value of his Russian degrees. For months he went from hospital to hospital with the same results; they all told him he needed at least another year of medical school! But he had almost no money; the little he brought went for the first month's rent and now the landlord was hounding him for the two following months that he owed.

"I got one last terrible letter from him and then they stopped coming. He wrote that he was totally depressed and trapped. He had no money, no job, no hope and no energy. He couldn't even return to Russia or

come to Israel... he had nothing and his debts were piling up.

"I was really worried. I had no way of contacting him and so it went for over a month. NOTHING.

But then I got a letter. It was the happiest day in my life! He said he was fine and optimistic. And he told the following story.

"After he wrote the previous letter he decided that he would (G-d forbid) end his own life.

"He stayed up the entire night thinking about it and became more and more depressed until the sun rose. It was a cool Friday morning when he walked out of his apartment onto the sidewalk. He walked in a daze for several hours until he found himself walking to a local bridge. He had nothing to live for anymore. No one cared. He had no future. Everything was black all around him. He decided he would (G-d forbid) jump off into oblivion.

"But then someone called out to him! Excuse me sir, are you Jewish?" He tried to just ignore it but such a question coming from nowhere almost made him laugh.

Jewish? Where did that come from? He stopped for a moment and that was enough. The young man began to hound him saying 'Nu, if you're Jewish come put on Tefillin.'

"My brother had never put on Tefillin in his life. We were atheists from Communist Russia where only freaks put on Tefillin. But the fellow got my brother talking until he convinced him to do it. He put on Tefillin and then told him what he about to do. The young man almost fainted.

"What?" he said "Why do such a crazy thing? You're a human being! And you're a Jew! It's forbidden to give up."

"Anyway he convinced my brother to put on Tefillin and to come with him to Shabbat in Crown Heights and then somehow arranged him a meeting with the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

"Well, I don't know what the Rebbe said there to my brother but he came out of the Rebbe's room a different man. Maybe they even gave him some money or found him a job or something but my brother didn't tell me that. He just said that he spoke to the Lubavitcher Rebbe and everything will be all right.

"And he ended the letter saying 'My dear sister, if you have a living brother today it is only in the merit of the Lubavitcher Rebbe'"

The woman turned to Mrs. Estulin with tears in her eyes and said. "Now please tell me more about these Shabbat Candles."

Published by **The Chabad House of Caulfield** in conjunction with the **Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.**

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ISSUE 1234

MOSHIACH MATTERS

In Psalms, we read over and over again how King David yearns to be connected with G-d. "My soul thirsts for you... in a parched and weary land without water. So too, to see you in the holy [place]..." The Baal Shem Tov explains that in this verse King David is relating how envious he is of the yearning that the Jews will experience during the time of exile. Specifically in that state, when the soul is far from G-d, she yearns for Him. King David pleads that the soul should similarly thirst for G-d even when living in a state of holiness. (*Appendix to Keter Shem Tov*)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Continued from last week's issue, freely translated

The difficulties, trials, and tests of life are themselves the means by which we are to attain our ultimate objective - that the soul achieves the lofty spiritual level it once possessed before it descended into the body: "The soul that you have given me is pure." The purpose of life is for the soul to regain that level of original "purity" and even transcend it - for one hour of teshuva (repentance) and good deeds in this world is worth more than all the lifetime of the spiritual World to Come.

So you see that life's trials, tragedies and difficulties actually bring us closer to our goal, our *raison d'être*; they are part of the divine system of toil and endeavor enabling us, finite mortals, to reach the highest levels of rewards and goodness - which can only be earned by meaningful "labor" and effort. It follows that one must not allow the difficulties of life's trials (or even one's failure from time to time) to overcome the double joy of being G-d's children and of having received His promise "Your people are all righteous."

Now along comes an individual - yourself - who is not just an ordinary person, but one who has heard of the light of Chasidic teachings, what is more, who has actually studied Chasidism, what is more, one whom the Alm-ghty has refined and purified through affliction; yet you are in a mood of despair, you "find no place for yourself," etc. Your estimation of your own worth and spiritual level is so far below the truth that it contradicts not only faith but simple logic as well. The Alm-ghty has given us an irrevocably firm promise that ultimately no one will be rejected by Him, and He does not require of the individual deeds that exceed his ability - for the Alm-ghty does not present His creations with unreasonable demands. G-d wants only that one's deeds measure up to his abilities. And G-d declares to each of us, "Make an opening for Me even as the point of a needle, then I will make an opening for you as wide as the entrance to a hall."

All this is the declaration and promise of the Alm-ghty to us. Now you come along and say that your analysis of the situation is different; it is an analysis that leads to despair. You wring your hands and persuade yourself that from time to time you are descending lower and lower. One can ask the classic rhetorical question, "When the teacher's opinions contradict the pupil's, to whose opinion do we listen?" You should ask yourself this question. It seems to you that the situation is depressingly hopeless; the Alm-ghty says it is not so. Is there any doubt who is right?

So much for arguments: Now to get down to practical matters: You must know and realize that you are one of our community of Chasidim, which means in turn that you are connected, as a leaf or branch, to the "Tree of Life" of our saintly Chasidic leaders. This connection has the effect expressed by the verse, "You who cleave to G-d your G-d are alive, all of you, this day." Our sages comment: "Even on a day when the world is dying, you live; and just as you are all alive today so will you be alive in the spiritual World to Come." So you see that you have a personal promise from our Sages that you are alive today and that you will be alive in the World to Come. In light of all the above you must utilize your time to practice Torah and mitzvos (commandments) in the spirit of *Yiras Shamayim* (awe of G-d). You must also utilize the artistic talent, with which the Alm-ghty has blessed you, to further religious feeling. You cannot delay this task until tomorrow, for tomorrow has its own tasks; today, you must do today's tasks. To accomplish these goals you must be aware that all hindrances are plans of the yetzer (inclination [to evil]); you must bring this into your mind and intellect, into your heart and emotions and into practical levels of thought, speech and deed.

When you apply yourself to this task, though it might well seem to you that you can only make an inroad as tiny as the point of a needle, the Alm-ghty will respond by granting you success; as promised, G-d will "make an opening as wide as the entrance of a hall." I hope you will not take the delay of my response into consideration, and that you will respond very soon with heartening tidings - mainly that you have begun to act in the spirit of the above.

CUSTOMS CORNER

Tzedakah

Tzedakah-often translated as charity-is a mainstay of Jewish life. The sages teach that the world was built upon kindness. However, Tzedakah goes one step beyond. Literally translated as "justice" or "righteousness," Tzedakah tells us that sharing what we have with others isn't something special. It's the honest and just thing to do.

A WORD

from the Director

This week's Torah portion, Pekudei, contains within it the verses, "...and the children of Israel did according to everything that G-d had commanded Moses, so they did. And they brought the Sanctuary to Moses..." (Exodus 39:32-33)

The famous commentator, Rashi, notes that the Children of Israel brought the unconstructed Sanctuary to Moses because they were not able to set it up. The Sanctuary materials required superhuman strength for its construction. Moses, however, by merely placing his hand on the myriad collection of boards, pillars, etc., raised it.

The verses quoted above teach valuable lessons about how each person can build his own inner spiritual Sanctuary.

When the Children of Israel built the actual physical Sanctuary, they constructed it with all of the numerous details that G-d had commanded to Moses. Though they had not yet been commanded to erect the Sanctuary, and in the end, did not erect it themselves, they still made sure not to skip even one small item or part about which they were instructed.

This is similar to a Jew's relationship with G-d. From the start, it is incumbent upon each of us to be involved with Judaism in an all-encompassing capacity. This includes the many numerous details of the mitzvot that G-d has commanded us.

It is possible that despite all of this work on our part, we will not reach a level whereby we can "erect" our own personal Sanctuary. For, in order for the Sanctuary to be established and endure, Moses must somehow play a part in it.

Once we have done all we can in the way of building our own Sanctuary, we connect with the "Moses", the spiritual leader of our generation, to help in the ultimate crowning of all of our work and achievements and the uplifting of our spiritual service to its highest possible level.

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Rabbi Moshe Leib Isserles (the Rema) and Rabbi Chaim, the brother of the Maharal of Prague were dear friends all their lives. When Rabbi Isserles assumed the office of Chief Rabbi of the Rabbinical Court of Cracow, Rabbi Chaim accompanied him and served as an adjunct in his rabbinical duties.

After the tragic death of Rabbi Chaim's wife and the year of mourning, it would have been customary to begin the search for a suitable match. When Rabbi Chaim made no attempt to remarry, it was assumed that he was waiting for Rabbi Moshe's intervention, but Rabbi Chaim had his own plan. He contacted a matchmaker and stated his requirements: He wanted a G-d-fearing and modest woman, with the means to support a Torah scholar and a private place where he could study undisturbed. He also required that neither his wife nor her family would reveal Rabbi Chaim's true identity.

Not long after, the matchmaker came up with the perfect match. The good woman was the daughter of a baker, and both she and her father agreed to all of Rabbi Chaim's conditions. A special room was filled with many holy books, and the couple was betrothed in utter secrecy.

A few weeks later, Rabbi Chaim came to his friend and said, "I want you to know that I have decided to travel to my home town to visit my elder brother."

Rabbi Moshe was shocked and deeply saddened by the news. He tried to dissuade Rabbi Chaim, but he refused to discuss his decision. When Rabbi Moshe saw that his words had no effect, he said, "If there is nothing I can do to change your mind, I will at least send you off with great honour."

Rabbi Chaim kept his own counsel and quietly implemented his plan. Rabbi Moshe prepared a great celebration to mark his friend's departure. When it drew to a close, Rabbi Moshe tearfully accompanied his friend several miles on the way before they parted.

Now came the next phase of his plan. Rabbi Chaim assumed a disguise so effective, he was virtually unrecognizable. He returned to his father-in-law's house in Cracow by a circuitous route, and there a simple wedding was performed. Although the townsfolk thought it odd that the baker made no wedding feast, they soon forgot it in the crush of everyday concerns. Rabbi Chaim and his wife lived harmoniously, and from that day forth, he remained in his home studying Torah and never venturing out.

A few years later a terrible plague broke out in Cracow. The townsfolk went to Rabbi Moshe to ask if this could be a punishment for some unknown sin. After some investigation, his attendants brought the rabbi a shocking report. The baker's daughter was suspected of living with a man without having had a proper marriage. Rabbi Moshe ordered the man brought to him at once.

Although when Rabbi Chaim arrived at the rabbinical court, he tried to keep his face averted, his friend recognized him at once. Rabbi Moshe led Rabbi Chaim into his private chambers and fell weeping with joy into his arms. But when he looked up, his friend was laughing.

Rabbi Moshe stared at Rabbi Chaim and said: "I will ask you just three things: Where were you before you came to the baker's house? What is the truth about the sin they are speaking of? Why did you laugh?"

"Let me reply. When I served the community's needs, I suffered, for I had no time to study the Torah as intensively as I wished. Now I can follow the dictates of my heart. As for sin, there is none. I have been happily married for two years. My only problem was the gnawing thought that perhaps I was sinfully proud of my accomplishments. I prayed to G-d for a humble heart, but I had not anticipated the correction would come through such humiliation! I

laughed because I saw you weep, and then I knew that my punishment was fulfilled."

Rabbi Moshe called his servants: "This man is no sinner, he may leave in peace."

That night Rabbi Moshe couldn't stop thinking about the day's events. Rabbi Chaim had removed himself from all worldly matters and spent his days and nights sitting in a barren room studying Torah. He had to go see this for himself. Late the following night, he stood outside Rabbi Chaim's room. Listening closely, he could hear his friend's voice, but there was another voice as well. Finally, he knocked on the door and announced himself.

"Enter," he was told. There was Rabbi Chaim, sitting alone at a table. "Who else was here with you?" Rabbi Moshe inquired, but he received no reply.

"I order you to reply!"

"If you command me as the rabbi, I must obey. The other voice you heard was that of the Prophet Elijah, who comes here to teach me."

When he heard this, Rabbi Moshe became faint. "Ask him what sin I have committed that I don't merit to learn from him."

"Tell Rabbi Moshe Isserles," the prophet replied, "that he has committed no sin. But the spiritual and the grandiose cannot mix. Rabbi Moshe occupies himself with his holy rabbinical service to the community and he must conduct himself in a manner befitting the honour of his position. I can come only to those whose good deeds are hidden from the public eye."

Thoughts THAT COUNT

One hundred sockets for the one hundred talents, a talent for every socket (Ex. 38:27)

One hundred is the number of sockets that were in the Sanctuary and the number of blessings that a Jew must recite each day. The same way that the sockets served as the foundation for the entire edifice, so do the blessings which a Jew makes serve as a foundation and basis for life. The Hebrew word for socket is "eden," which comes from the same root as "adon," or master. When a Jew makes a blessing and proclaims that G-d is "master" of the world, he is at the same time forming the "sockets" and support for his own personal spiritual sanctuary. (*Chidushai HaRim*)

And the Children of Israel did according to everything that G-d had commanded to Moses, they did it. (Ex. 39:32)

The Sanctuary, about which G-d commanded Moses, is described in the Torah portions Teruma and Tetzaveh. The Sanctuary which the Children of Israel actually built is discussed in the portions Vayakhel and Pekudei. The first two portions refer to, in actuality, a spiritual sanctuary, while the second two portions a physical sanctuary. For this reason, every detail concerning the Sanctuary was given twice. In essence, it was about two totally different Sanctuaries that these portions speak. (*Likutei Sichot*)

And Moses blessed them (Ex. 39:43)

What was his blessing? "May it be G-d's will that the Divine Presence rest on the work of your hands." Every blessing, of any type, needs a proper "vessel" on which to rest. A person cannot sit back and wait for G-d to shower him with blessings; he must take practical action and expend the required effort in forming the vessel. (*Imrei Shefer*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 11 MARCH 2016

BEGINS	ENDS
7.27MELBOURNE	8.23
7.21ADELAIDE	8.16
5.51BRISBANE	6.42
6.45DARWIN	7.34
5.49GOLD COAST	6.41
6.21PERTH	7.14
7.00SYDNEY	7.54
7.09CANBERRA	8.04
7.20LAUNCESTON	8.18
7.28AUCKLAND	8.23
7.30WELLINGTON	8.27
7.20HOBART	8.19
6.49BYRON BAY	7.41



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAR STREET, CAULFIELD
PARSHAS PIKUDEI • 1 ADAR 2 • 11 MARCH

FRIDAY NIGHT	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7.27 PM	
	MINCHA:	7.35 PM	
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8.05 PM	
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10.00 AM	
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10.22 AM	
	MINCHA:	7.35 PM	
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8.23 PM	
WEEKDAYS	SHACHARIS	SUN-FRI:	8.00 AM / 9.15 AM
	MINCHA:		7.00 / 7.25 PM
	MAARIV:		8.15 PM